

RESOLUTION NO. 2022-XXX

RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING A COMMUNITY 24X7
CARBON-FREE ELECTRICITY GOAL FOR THE CITY OF
WATERLOO

WHEREAS, the City of Waterloo is responsible for promoting the public health and safety of its residents, including access to clean air, clean water, and a livable environment; and is committed in those endeavors to actions that foster a clean energy future for the City of Waterloo and its residents; and

WHEREAS, the City of Waterloo is responsible for and committed to a healthy and vibrant economy and recognizes that many companies and their employees value reliable, affordable clean energy when considering business retention, expansion, and employment decisions, which makes clean energy a valuable tool for economic development; and

WHEREAS, the transition to a 24x7 zero-carbon community, reliant on the efficient use of a mix of carbon-free electric energy resources, will provide a range of benefits including but not limited to reduced greenhouse gas emissions, improved air quality, enhanced public health, business attraction, local job growth, increased resilience, and energy security; and

WHEREAS, there is scientific consensus regarding the reality of climate change and the connection between human activities, especially the combustion of fossil fuels that create greenhouse gases, and warming of the planet; and

WHEREAS, the 2018 report of the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) found that to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius, there would need to be a 45% reduction of greenhouse from 2010 levels by 2030 and a need to reach net-zero by 2050; and

WHEREAS, the City of Waterloo has experienced the effects of climate change locally through increased temperatures, changes in water systems, extreme weather events such as the record rainfalls and flooding of June 2008 and September 2016, and other disruptions that threaten our residents, economy, and overall quality of life; and

WHEREAS, inaction perpetuates inequity and ensures the burdens of climate hazards will be borne by the City's most marginalized and vulnerable residents; and

WHEREAS, carbon-free energy resources paired with energy storage, and microgrids, where feasible, are important strategies to build disaster resilience into our communities and will assist with disaster recovery; and ensuring equitable distribution of the benefits of these resources is imperative to adequately prepare for disasters, particularly those exacerbated by climate change; and

WHEREAS, the City of Waterloo, through Resolution No. 2020-71, formally recognized the impacts global warming is having on the community and committed to implementing actions to reduce carbon emissions; and

WHEREAS, the City of Waterloo is taking steps to reduce carbon emissions by working with local businesses to install charging stations in parking lots, implementing an e-scooter mobility program in downtown Waterloo, and designing a biogas reuse project to capture, clean, and reuse methane released at the waste treatment plant; and

WHEREAS, a host of solutions exist to provide reliable, affordable, and sustainable energy while reducing demand and emissions, including but not limited to solar, wind, energy storage, geothermal, biomass, energy efficiency, demand control technologies, carbon sequestration, waste reduction, water systems technologies, and tree planting; and

WHEREAS, new and existing buildings must play a key role in reducing energy demand through smart building technologies, grid interaction, electrification, and efficiency, with residential, commercial, and industrial energy usage; and

WHEREAS, transportation advancements, including electric vehicles, intermodal transit, and pedestrian and bicycle-oriented streets offer solutions to limit harmful vehicle emissions, reduce congestion, and support vibrant neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, the City of Waterloo and MidAmerican Energy Company (MidAmerican) have been long-time partners providing reliable and affordable electric energy to residents, businesses, and facilities in the City of Waterloo. As part of this partnership, MidAmerican is committed to a 100% carbon-free energy vision for its Iowa customers, and who under GreenAdvantage® delivered approximately 88.5% of its customers' energy needs from renewable sources in 2021; and

WHEREAS, MidAmerican is a leader with renewable energy through a renewable generation fleet that includes its first utility-scale solar project, which is located in Waterloo and generates capacity equal to 650 average Iowa homes; and

WHEREAS, MidAmerican has an application pending before the Iowa Utilities Board for its Wind PRIME project, which will allow it to complete wind and solar projects that will enable it to serve 100% of its customers' annual energy needs with renewable energy by 2025; and

WHEREAS, MidAmerican has a further goal of attaining net-zero carbon emissions by 2050 and to that end has committed, through its Wind PRIME project and other initiatives, to studying and advancing emerging clean energy technologies like carbon capture, energy storage, and modular nuclear to attain a net-zero future that maintains affordability and reliability and promotes the personal and economic vitality of Iowa's communities, businesses, and residents; and

WHEREAS, MidAmerican enhances its clean energy generation work with energy efficiency, electric vehicle charging, tree planting, low-income energy assistance and other practical programs that increase energy accessibility; reduce, minimize, and mitigate emissions; and contribute positively to the net-zero effort; and

WHEREAS, the City of Waterloo and MidAmerican, recognizing that energy flows not just locally but regionally and nationally, and that access to consistently affordable and reliable energy requires collaboration that takes due consideration of factors and circumstances that affect the energy grid at all levels, wish to partner on the journey to net zero by leveraging their respective expertise and aligning resources and efforts where their missions and interests intersect.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WATERLOO, IOWA, as follows:

1. That the City hereby updates its greenhouse-gas emission goals to align with IPCC recommendations and commits to developing partnerships that advance a 45% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from 2010 levels by 2030 and to reach net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.
2. That the City hereby commits to an affordable and reliable community-wide goal of achieving 100% 24x7 electricity from carbon-free sources by 2035.
3. That City leaders will work with utility partners, businesses, residents, and community stakeholders to identify a collaborative approach to achieve the emissions targets and energy goals with meaningful benchmarks and milestones between now and the target years referenced in this resolution.
4. That the City of Waterloo will increase its partnership with the Center for Energy and Environmental Education at the University of Northern Iowa to implement the goals of this resolution.

5. That the City of Waterloo will partner with MidAmerican Energy to implement electric vehicle charging stations at city facilities.

6. That the City of Waterloo will work with MidAmerican and other businesses, residents, and community stakeholders to engage in a collaborative effort to achieve emissions reductions and clean energy initiatives and advancements that responsibly, reliably, and affordably deliver a sustainable, net zero future to the City of Waterloo, its residents and businesses. This collaboration shall include, but not be limited to, efforts to encourage energy efficiency to reduce energy consumption and use. The City of Waterloo will deliver an annual update on the status of these efforts.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this 18th day of July 2022.

Quentin Hart, Mayor

ATTEST:

Kelley Felchle, City Clerk

SEAL:

